



Soaring to new heights with Google Cloud Technology

Frequently Asked Questions (updated 1/27/12)

What is “Cloud Technology” or “Cloud Computing”?

Data is migrating beyond the boundaries of personal computers and business networks. When we watch a YouTube video, attend an online training session, upload photos or use a search engine, we’re using cloud technology to plug into the collective power of thousands of computer rooms around the world (or in our case, the U.S. only.) This phenomenon is what we typically refer to as cloud computing. With Google’s powerful cloud technology and various applications (Google Apps), we could lose every computer at City Hall, and our data (such as email, calendar and documents) would be safe and accessible from any Internet-connected device, anywhere in the world.

What are some of the benefits of using Google?

- Better mobile device integration
- Access to data (Gmail, calendars, documents, etc) from anywhere, on any device with an Internet connection
- Greater collaboration through Google Apps for Government such as documents, video chats, sites and blogs
- Off-site data storage ensures access during emergencies and faster disaster recovery
- Google Apps for Government segregates government data for better security and ensures storage in the U.S., where it is protected by federal laws and regulations
- No additional client needed for email, docs or chat - just a web browser
- Allows I.T. to remove 3 servers from service

Why now?

The City was facing an uncertain future with legacy email and calendar software from Novell Groupwise. Groupwise has been sold, and Novell’s customer service has declined. We would need to invest in new platforms to continue with Groupwise. With a new focus on customer service, collaboration and communication, it made sense to move to Google’s powerful cloud technology. Google Apps for Government will provide email and calendar services backed by multiple Google data centers, as well as Google’s guarantee of 99.9% uptime. In emergency situations, such as an extended power outage, the City’s email system will continue to function from any device with an Internet connection.

When will the transition take place?

- There will be a Pilot Phase (January through mid-February) for I.T. and a small group of employees to begin testing applications.
- In the Early Adopters – Mock Go Live Phase (mid-February or early-March through April), about 10 percent of our employees will begin using the system.
- In the Go-Live Phase (mid-April), all 1,110+ users will transition to Gmail and Calendar. Other Google Apps will be available, as well.
- During the Final Transition (June –July), we will complete data migration before the contract with Groupwise ends in late July.

What is the strategy for smoothing the transition?

Support and training will be available from our vendor throughout the process. We have communications and technical teams working to keep our end users connected, informed and engaged. There will be training and demonstration stations. Communication strategies include regular emails, newsletters, meetings, webinars, blogs and more.

How was Google selected?

A Request for Proposal (RFP) for email and collaboration suite services was issued by the Purchasing Division on 10/26/2011. The RFP was open for public view and bidding until November 11, 2011. The bid was issued to approximately 554 vendors through the City's electronic procurement system. We received one proposal from the Onix Networking Corporation, who offered Google Apps for Government (which ensures data storage in the U.S.), Google message discovery and consultation services. After closed negotiations between Onix and the City, an agreement was reached for \$71, 618.50 for licenses, message discovery with ten-year retention, consultation services for transition and cloud migrator license fees.

How safe is our data?

Google Apps for Government provides segregated systems for U.S. government customers. Government customer data is stored in the U.S. only. Data is virtually protected, as if it were on its own server. Unauthorized parties cannot access our data and vice versa. In fact, all user accounts are protected via this virtual lock and key that ensures that one user cannot see another user's data. This is similar to how customer data is segmented in other shared infrastructures such as online banking applications.

How can I find out more about the transition to Google?

A communications team is working to keep City Council, administrators, employees and community stakeholders connected, informed and engaged throughout the transition.

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